

midwest

Winter 2005

Home

chicago

17 

INSPIRING HOMES

LUXURY HOME TOUR | COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

WINTER 2005 / \$3.99



54

0 74470 56373 0



Simplicity, Italian Style

BY LISA SKOLNIK | PHOTO BY SALLY GOOD

Italy is equally renowned for resplendent Renaissance art and architecture as it is for sleek contemporary fashions and furnishings. No surprise, then, that Italians often revere the old and embrace the new, effortlessly integrating both into their lives. Roman-transplant Patrizio Fradiani, 37, who moved to Chicago in 1997 to practice architecture, is no exception.

"I have a passion for the Renaissance, but I also love modernism and contemporary Italian design," says Fradiani, who opened Studio F last spring. All these influences, from the symmetry and classically derived architectural elements inspired by the former, to the cool, lean-lined finishes and furnishings of the latter, are incorporated into his work—tempered with a healthy dose of restraint.

But don't call his work austere. "I'm not a minimalist. My aesthetic just tends towards simplicity," Fradiani explains. His designs are clad with materials chosen for their texture, color, and luminosity. The glass panels he uses for dividers or doors, and the tiles he chooses to sheathe an entire bathroom, are sandblasted, brushed, or etched, and subtly tinged with color to scatter, reflect, and amplify light.

The results are open, light-filled homes that are versatile in scope and soothing in demeanor. Case in point: the dowdy

Victorian farmhouse with small, dark rooms that now has a gracious layout, generously sized spaces, and a gourmet kitchen edged with a dazzling floor-to-ceiling gable made of commercial-grade curtain wall. Or there's the once-prosaic mid-century split level with a crisp new exterior faced with lustrous aluminum and chalky fiber-cement siding. Its new windows, re-worked walls, and series of sliding partitions make for soaring ceilings and transmutable rooms. Both homes also possess burgeoning gardens, with alfresco entertaining areas designed and furnished by Fradiani.

The newcomer has an architecture degree from University of Rome *La Sapienza* and is in the process of finishing the American licensing process, but he has already attracted much attention. He has been featured in numerous local and national publications, as well as a design book from a major publisher.

Fradiani attributes this success to the integrated approach he employs. "In Italy, we're trained to look at a project in its entirety. We're responsible for the landscape design, the architecture, and all the furnishings, so you get more cohesive results," he explains.

Talent just may have something to do with it as well.

LISA SKOLNIK IS A CHICAGO WRITER WHO SPECIALIZES IN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON RESOURCES FEATURED IN THIS STORY, PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 116.